

River Of Life Christian Ministries

Willie R. McMiller, Sr.
Pastor

"Where healing waters flow"

Minerva A. McMiller
First Lady

July 12, 2021

To: The Honorable Judge Stephen R. Clark

RE: Reference letter for defendant Mark Edward Hunter Jr.

Your Honor:

My name is Willie R. McMiller Sr. I am the Senior Pastor of River Of Life Christian Ministries located in Spanish Lake, MO. I am writing on behalf of Mark Edward Hunter Jr, a defendant in your courtroom.

While I am not biologically related to Mark, I am the father of five sons, all of whom are friends of Mark. I have known him for over thirteen (13) years. He has had sleepovers in our home, eaten many family meals at our table, and my wife and I consider him family.

Mark regularly attends our church services and have been a part of our Youth Department. He assists at our emergency food pantry and willingly helps whenever I ask for volunteers to serve at the church. He is a hard worker, and never asks for monetary or any other compensation.

Since I have known Mark, I have not seen him use any illicit drugs, drink alcohol, or engage in dangerous or improper behavior. He suffers from narcolepsy and has ensured me that he does not do any drugs other than his prescription medication. His behavior around my wife, my family, and the church members is very positive and respectful.

For these reasons, I was shocked and disappointed in the criminal activity for which he committed and for which he has been charged. I can attest that this was a singular act and not representative of his character that we have grown to know. He has expressed to me his extreme sorrow for this transgression and considers it a true lapse in judgement that would never be repeated.

I offer this letter in support of Mark and pray for mercy when you consider his punishment. Please feel free to contact me personally at (314) 315-6389 if you have questions regarding this letter.

Respectfully Submitted,



Willie R. McMiller, Sr.
Senior Pastor

To the Honorable Judge

My name is Sandra Stuckey, I am best friends with Mark E. Hunter's mother Clarissa Colvin. I have known Mark for over 20 years and his mother for over 30 years. I have known him and his entire family for a long period of time so I consider them family rather than friends.

Throughout the long history of knowing Mark, I can say without a shadow of a doubt that he is a fine young man who has simply made a mistake. I haven't known of Mark causing his mother any issues as a child or even in his high school years. I have also known Mark to be a hard worker and a helpful person. If I ever needed him to help me with a project or to do anything for me he would help out with no hesitation.

When I heard about his incident I was shocked with the choice that he had made that has affected his life. I'm sure that he will and has learned from this mistake. I also see that he is keeping himself employed and busy while waiting to be sentenced. I would ask if you could give him a chance to continue to prove himself that he is what his mother worked hard and raised him to be. Which is being a very respectful and responsible man.

Sandra Stuckey

To: The Honorable Judge Stephen R Clark

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter. I am writing you on behalf of my son Mark Hunter who is appearing before the court due to weapon charges. I recognize Mark is here to plead guilty, as he should. Mark is finding out the hard way that the smallest temptation can ruin the hugest chance at success by making a bad decision seeing what he thought was an opportunity to make extra money without realizing the consequences. When Mark was questioned, he admitted fault without placing blame on anyone else. So many choices on how he should handle this situation but the only thing came to his mind was to be honest, admit to his mistake and hope for another opportunity to show this will never happen again.

Mark is a great young man with a huge heart , I know this is coming from a mom but if you asked us to make 25 phone calls right now to friends, family, neighbors, coworkers and even children the response will call come back with nothing but positive feedback. He's the go too guy for paintings, artwork on clothing, bike repairs and skate lessons.

As a kid, Mark struggled with staying focused due to having a sleep disorder called Narcolepsy that came along in high school. Mark is taking medication where the side effects are depression, very vivid dreams, and cataplexy but despite it all he fought through staying woke and keeping up from grade to grade even if it meant summer school each year. He also did a few semester of college but struggled with staying woke and opt for hands on immediate work to stay woke that demand physical movement all day. Mark has held a job since he started working with no gaps in between. He did not work in high school due to the demands of needing to be alert during class and needing sleep in the evenings. He is back working already working 10 hour days on the weekend at Amazon and learning to rehab houses during the week.

We have decided not to keep this a secret with Mark's cousin who also look up to him and use this as an opportunity to mentor the younger ones coming along who feels he can do no wrong. We have been using our male college graduates as role models but decided to also show the ugly side of making a split second bad decision.

I know with all my heart that this was an isolated incident; Mark is remorseful and can see the ramification of a bad decision. I know he has to be punished for his actions and although he is not confined he is being punished already and is asking for leniency that it not be jail time. He has already started picking up the pieces by working and doing everything the courts have set in place for him while out on bail.

Thank you for allowing me to submit this letter.

Clarissa Colvin

Your Honor,

My name is Deneshion Darby, and I am writing this letter on behalf of Mark Edward Hunter Jr. I am a long time friend and coworker of Mark's mom.

Steve Maraboli, an American author and veteran once said, "We all make mistakes, have struggles, and even regret things in our past. But you are not your mistakes, you are not your struggles, and you are here NOW with the power to shape your day and your future."

Your honor, when I think of this quote, I think of Mark. I have known him since he was a child and I have had the pleasure of watching him grow. I've rode bikes with him, he also taught my daughter to ride a bike and is now helping perfect her skating skills. I would like to take this time to let you know what kind of person Mark is. Mark is kind. He is trustworthy. He is reliable. Mark is a loving son and a caring cousin. He is an amazing nephew and an awesome friend. He is loved within his community and brings so much joy wherever he goes. Mark is so much more than I can put into words.

Just as I was able to express who Mark is, I can also express who he is not. He is not his mistake. He is not whatever struggles he has faced in life. We all make mistakes, some more grave than others, but I strongly believe in empathy and second chances. Your honor, I ask that you see past Mark's mistake and believe in the person that I know he is. I am asking you to believe in the person that I know he can be. I am asking you to think of his future when making your decision regarding his sentence. To think of all the potential that he has.

Just as Steve Maraboli said, Mark does have the power to shape his future. I hope you give him the chance to use that power.

Thank You,


Deneshion Darby



Blake Douglas

8/03/2021

4559 Athlone Ave

St. Louis, MO 63115

Dear The Honorable Judge Stephen R Clark,

I am writing this letter to provide a character reference for Mark Hunter. I have known Mark my entire life; he is my older cousin. I feel compelled to write this letter to shed light on the Mark's character in hopes you will get a glimpse of a genuine person.

Growing up, Mark and I spent a lot of time together. We went to school together and when we weren't in school, we were at each other's house. In many ways he's more like an older brother than a cousin. As kids, he always looked out for me. From the playground to this day, he always made sure I was taken care of. I have a specific memory from when we were younger. We were on the school playground. The rule for the swings was: if someone was on the swing, you had to count to one hundred then it would be your turn. I was so young; I didn't know how to count to one hundred. Knowing this, Mark would leave his friends and come over to count for me. I was so young, but I felt the sense of selflessness and love. The same selflessness that is present to this day.

I understand Mark has committed a crime, but I am writing this letter to offer a fuller picture of him as a person.

I am available to confirm facts of this letter as necessary.

Thank you for your time,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Blake Douglas". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Blake Douglas

314-277-2197

Dear Honorable Stephen R. Clark
I am writing this letter in regards to Mark Hunter, I am aware of why he is in this trouble. Mark is not a bad person, he I know has never been in trouble or given his mother any problems, this was such a shock to me and family members and friends. I know he has learned a great lesson from this and the waiting and not knowing has given him much time to think & examine things. Mark is very close to his mother it has been them two since he was very young. I know being locked up will destroy his life, he has always worked since high school, Mark's life will not be any good locked up. I pray that he gets a chance to prove that he will be a person of good standing if left out with maybe Community Service. Thank you very much for reading my letter and hopefully giving Mark a second chance, his Aunt

Vivian Matthews
2042 Wilbert Dr
St Louis, Mo. 314-874-6467

7/27/2021

Dear Honorable Judge Stephen R Clark,

I am writing on behalf of my nephew, Mark E Hunter. I am his maternal aunt, Kathy Cox. I am writing seeking this Honorable court to show mercy and be lenient in his sentencing. I have a very close relationship with Mark. A relationship I have valued since the day he was born. I believe he feels he has let us, his family, down. It pains me with the predicament he is now in. My nephew is a young man with a heart of gold that made a huge, stupid mistake. What was he thinking? I do not know, but the time spent while waiting for the decision on his future has made him realize the error of his ways. When I look at him, I do not see the carefree, innocent person he used to be. I see sincere regret, embarrassment, remorse, and humiliation.

I understand there must be repercussions for our actions but is imprisonment always the answer? Mark did the responsible thing and owned up to his actions instead of denying his wrong doings. His life has drastically changed. He does not have the freedom to come and go as he previously had. He is now 'supervised'. He must give 'samples' on the demand of others, adhere to unannounced home visits and can travel only so far without permission. We know the crime is serious and I am not asking you to ignore the crime. I am asking you to consider something other than imprisonment. Are there rehabilitation programs or some sort of therapy that could be utilized with probation and house arrest instead of imprisonment? Possibly, going around to schools, youth centers or group homes speaking to youths about how this has affected his life. I believe this time spent waiting on sentencing has made him realize the error of his ways even more so. It has given him time to reflect and come to terms with the mistake he made. He has shamed himself in the eyes of his family and younger cousins who looked up to him. We as a family have not swept his actions 'under the rug' but discussed it to stop others from doing foolish things.

I realize me saying my nephew, Mark is a fine young man may not carry any weight because I am family, but maybe you could speak with the people he has encountered in the judicial system while going through this ordeal. Ask them what their gut feelings are pertaining to Mark.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kathy Cox', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Kathy Cox
4559 Athlone Ave
St Louis Mo 63115
(314) 616-9038